

United Kingdom and U.S. sign groundbreaking nuclear technology agreement

Nexia Solutions, the organization that will form the foundation of the National Nuclear Laboratory (NNL) for the U.K., has signed a groundbreaking Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the U.S.-based Idaho National Laboratory (INL). The MoU will see the U.K. and U.S. pool resources and expertise to benefit both countries as well as global nuclear initiatives such as the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP).

Dr. Peter Bleasdale, managing director of Nexia Solutions said, "At a practical level, pooling resources and sharing expertise can help to address common issues such as reducing the cost of the development of new nuclear fuel cycle systems. At a more strategic level, the two organizations will be looking at how they can help make significant contributions to initiatives such as GNEP."

The INL is the U.S. Department of Energy's lead nuclear technology research, development and demonstration national laboratory, while Nexia Solutions is at the forefront of developing a NNL in the U.K. The two organizations have already identified areas of collaboration, and Nexia Solutions will be assisting INL in their approach to developing the next generation of recycling processes and nuclear plants. In comparison, the INL will be providing firsthand advice on the makeup and creation of an NNL as the U.K. goes through this process over the next few years.

Says INL Director John Grossenbacher, "This agreement will bring together the managing contractors of two national nuclear laboratories. Combining the unique skills and capabilities of both NNLs creates a powerful partnership that can lead to significant contributions in making clean, safe, secure commercial nuclear energy available worldwide.

"Both organizations have special expertise, capabilities and facilities that can complement each other, and I look forward to a productive long-term collaboration."

Bleasdale concludes, "As well as the INL, Nexia Solutions has strong links with a number of leading NNLs across the world including the Commissariat l'Energie Atomique (CEA) in France, the Japan Atomic Energy Agency (JAEA) and the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organization (ANSTO)."

Grossenbacher and Bleasdale

To mark the partnership, upwards of 60 area community leaders and representatives of DOE-Idaho, INL, CWI and BBWI attended a reception hosted by Nexia Solutions. The event celebrated Nexia Solution's transformation into the United Kingdom's new and first national nuclear laboratory and its new status as a counterpart of INL.

The following are excerpts from remarks made by Bleasdale at the event:

"There has been a growing recognition among decision makers in the U.K. that we need to maintain a national nuclear technology capability. Nexia Solutions has already been putting a great deal of effort into preserving and developing skills. There's no question that the National Lab will further support of this goal. Of course, the U.S. embraced the national lab model many decades ago. We've looked at the States and the INL as 'the benchmark' when planning our own lab. This has been a great help to us in Nexia Solutions as we have refined our

strategy to deliver the best possible solution for the U.K.

"If INL and Nexia Solutions work together effectively, any costly and time consuming duplication of effort can be avoided. Our partnership can support this for our mutual benefit and for our customers' benefit. There are many areas in which INL and Nexia Solutions carry out work to solve problems of a similar nature. Also, there are areas where we might have experience in the U.K. that will be helpful to U.S. programs, and know, for sure, that there are challenges that have been overcome over here that will be of immense assistance back in the U.K.

"The way I see it is that we both have similar problems with managing the technology to support our two nation's needs. If the two countries can work together to solve these common problems, the U.S. and UK governments get the solution for half the cost

"At Sellafield, we have an almost billion dollar facility that we are in the process of commissioning The British Technology Centre is our flagship and a superb facility. It will be the hub of the new National Lab You also have a range of state-of-the-art facilities over here. Making full use of these fabulous resources and the varied and unique skillshas the potential to bring enormous benefits to both organizations"

General Contact:

John Walsh, (208) 526-8646,

Teri Ehresman, (208) 521-9882,

[Feature Archive](#)

Photo: Sellers at podium

Nexia's Peter Bleasdale (left), INL's John Grossenbacher (middle) and DOE's Beth Sellers (right).